

That Which is Claimed

1. A method of distributing movies and music to customer households comprising the steps of:

blanket transmitting a plurality of movies and music selections to customer households;

permitting each customer household to preselect and record desired movies and music selections;

permitting each customer household to playback for viewing any preselected, recorded movie;

communicating movie playback information and music selection recording information from each customer household to a central controller system; and

billing customer households for music selections that are recorded and for only those preselected, recorded movies that are actually played back for viewing.

2. The method of claim 1 including the step of encoding the transmitted movies with data permitting playback only on a playback device with compatible decoding means.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the customer household records music selections on conventional compact discs (CD's) so that the recordings may be played back on conventional home or auto CD playback devices.

4. The method of claim 1 including the step of utilizing the movie playback information and music selection recording information communicated to the controller system to

credit the accounts of the content providers who provide movies for distribution and the music licensors who provide music selections for distribution.

5        5.    The method of claim 1 wherein the step of blanket transmitting movies and music to customer households is carried out by a transmission mode selected from the group consisting of direct broadcast satellite, optical fiber, cable modem and the Internet.

10       6.    The method of claim 1 wherein the step of blanket transmitting is carried out by direct broadcast satellite transmission on multiple channels.

15       7.    The method of claim 1 wherein the step of blanket transmitting is carried out by transmitting at least a portion of the movies in compressed-time format.

20       8.    The method of claim 7 wherein the transmission in compressed-time format is carried out by a data transmission means selected from the group consisting of direct broadcast satellite, optical fiber, cable modem, or combination thereof.

25       9.    The method of claim 7 wherein the customer household records movies that are transmitted in compressed-time format at a write speed faster than real time.

30       10.   The method of claim 9 wherein both the compressed time transmission and write speeds are eight to ten times real time or faster.

11. The method of claim 7 wherein the movies transmitted in compressed-time format are transmitted and recorded in the customer household at a resolution on the order of VHS resolution.

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12. The method of claim 7 wherein the movies transmitted in compressed-time format are recorded in the customer household on a magneto-optical device at a write speed on the order of 12 megabits/sec or greater.

13. A method of distributing movies and music to customer households comprising the steps of:

blanket transmitting a plurality of movies and music selections to customer households;

5 at each customer household, preselecting desired transmitted movies and music selections for recording;

at each customer household, recording preselected movies and music selections when they are transmitted;

10 at each customer household, playing back those preselected, recorded movies that the customer household desires to view;

providing a central controller system having a database for storing therein an address corresponding to each customer household;

15 communicating information from each customer household to the controller system to verify when a preselected music selection has been recorded and when a preselected, recorded movie has been played back for viewing; and

20 using the communicated information to charge each customer household when it records a music selection and when it views a preselected, recorded movie.

14. A system for distributing movies to customer households, comprising:

means for blanket transmitting a plurality of movies and music selections to customer households;

5 means permitting each customer household to preselect and record desired movies and music selections;

means permitting each customer household to playback for viewing any preselected, recorded movie;

10 means for communicating movie playback information and music selection recording information from each customer household to a central controller system; and

means for billing customer households for music selections that are recorded and for only those preselected, recorded movies that are actually played back for viewing.

15. A system for distributing movies to customer households, comprising:

a direct broadcast satellite (DBS) data transmission system blanket transmitting a plurality of encoded movies to customer households at a data transmission rate faster than real time;

a user station at each customer household, the user station including means permitting the customer household to preselect desired transmitted movies for recording;

a receiver and associated recording device at each customer household for recording preselected movies at a write speed faster than real time;

a playback device at each customer household for playing back those preselected, recorded movies that the customer household desires to view;

a central controller system having a database for storing therein an address corresponding to each customer household;

a communications link between each customer household and the central controller system to verify to the controller system that a preselected, recorded movie has been played back for viewing; and

a billing system associated with the central controller system to bill customer households for only those preselected, recorded movies that are played back for viewing.

16. The system of claim 15 wherein the recording device at the customer household has a write speed capability on the order of 12 megabits/sec or greater.

5 17. The system of claim 16 wherein the recording device at the customer household comprises a magneto-optical device.

10 18. The system of claim 15 wherein the recording device at the customer household has a write speed capable of recording movies at VHS resolution at eight to ten times real time or faster.

15 19. The system of claim 15 wherein during prime time viewing hours at least certain high demand movies are each transmitted at short intervals at eight to ten times real time or faster, so that a high demand movie may be available for viewing within no more than the interval time plus a transmission/recording time on the order of 11 to 14 minutes or less.

20 20. The system of claim 15 wherein the user station includes a memory buffer for processing preselected movie data before it is recorded at the customer household.

21. The system of claim 20 wherein the memory buffer includes a drive selected from the group consisting of magnetic drive, optical drive and magneto-optical drive.

22. The system of claim 20 wherein the memory buffer includes memory means selected from the group consisting of DRAM, flash memory, SRAM and digital tape.

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23. A system for distributing movies and music to customer households, comprising:

a data transmission system blanket transmitting a plurality of music selections and encoded movies to customer households;

a user station at each customer household, the user station including means permitting the customer household to preselect desired transmitted movies and music selections for recording;

a receiver and associated recording means at each customer household for recording preselected movies and music selections;

a playback device at each customer household for playing back those preselected, recorded movies that the customer household desires to view;

a central controller system having a database for storing therein an address corresponding to each customer household;

a communications link between each customer household and the central controller system to verify to the controller system when a preselected music selection has been recorded and when a preselected, recorded movie has been played back for viewing; and

a billing system associated with the central controller system to bill customer households for music

selections that are recorded and for only those preselected,  
recorded movies that are played back for viewing.

24. A method of distributing music to customer households comprising the steps of:

blanket transmitting a plurality of music selections to customer households by direct broadcast satellite (DBS) at data transmission rates faster than real time;

providing each customer household with information identifying available music selections that will be transmitted;

permitting each customer household to preselect and record desired music selections in conventional compact disc (CD) format;

permitting each customer household to permanently select recorded music selections that the customer wishes to maintain for unrestricted playback;

communicating permanent selection information from each customer household to a central controller system; and

billing customer households for the recorded music selections that are permanently selected.